

Giving Excluded Girls Their Authentic Selves and Communities Back

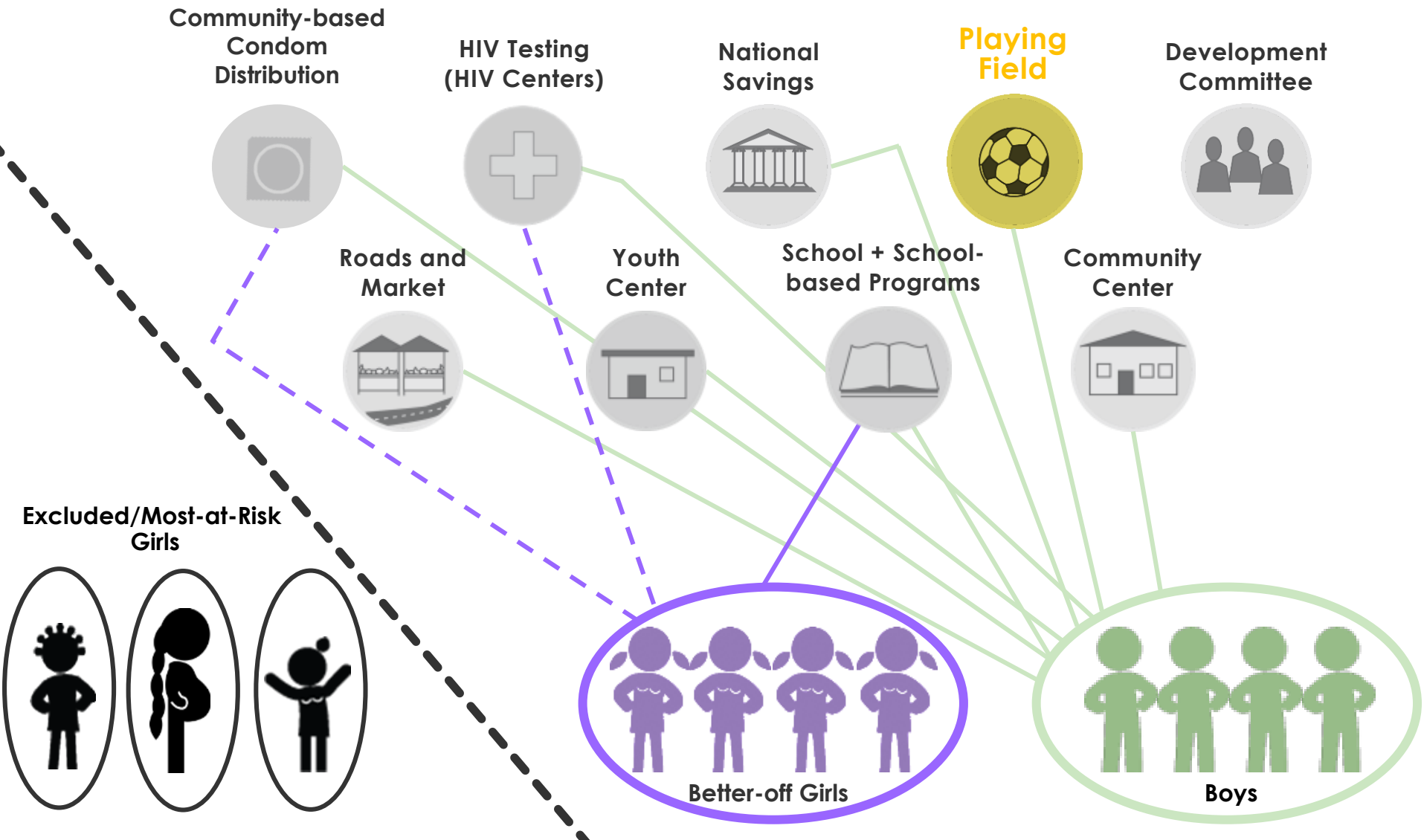


Prepared by Judith Bruce and Sophie Soares

Missing in Action: Engaging Marginalized Girls in Sports, CSW Side Session

3.16.18

“If We Build It, They Will Not Come” Exclusion of the Poorest Girls



Work with the **most marginalized** girls requires **disrupting** and **redirecting** the markets



Photo Credit: Donors: U.S. Department of State, DREAMS Innovation Challenge, JSI Research & Training Institute



Photo Credit: Population Council



Photo Credit: John Healey

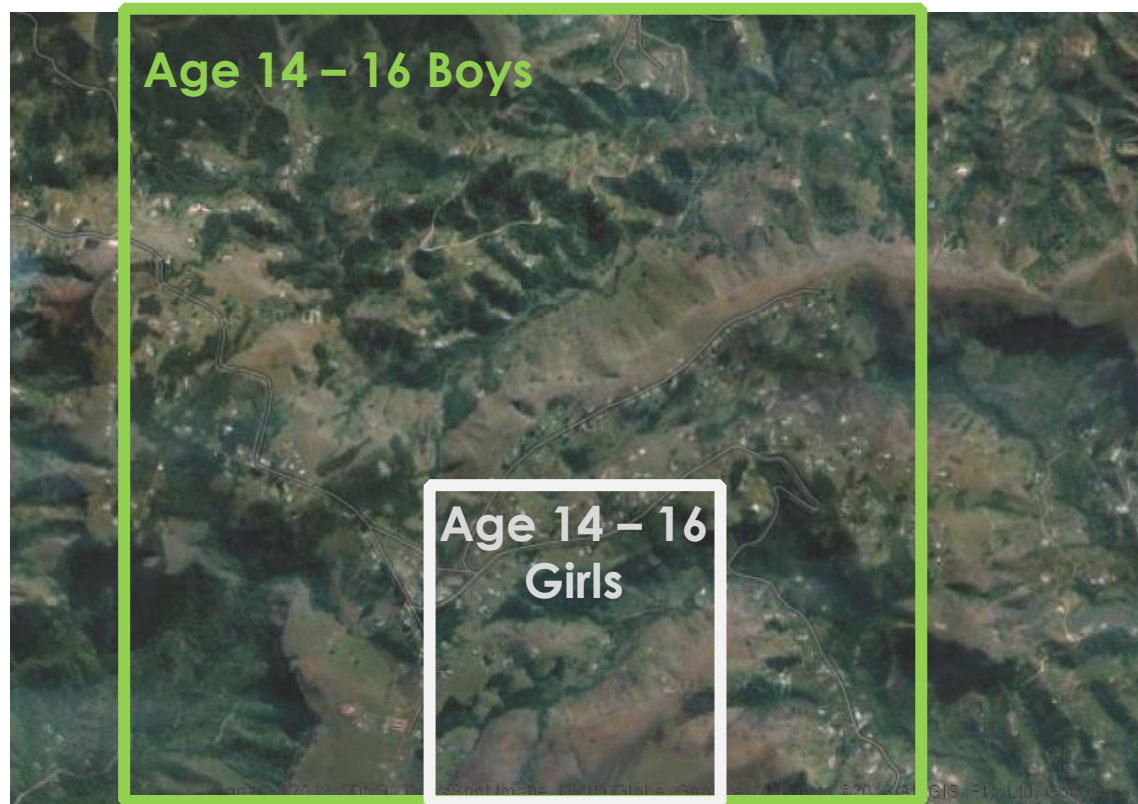
Communications, Identity and Social Media “Markets”

- Giving real girls, in real places, the skills to deflect sexualizing and demeaning imagery, craft and communicate positive self-images, and use the “media” to increase access to skills to entitlements and assets



Reshaping Social Capital “Markets”

- Giving girls their own space physically and aurally
- Friendship networks and mentors in a safe place with true peers
- A widening, measurable, and secure physical space within the community – *literally taking ground*)



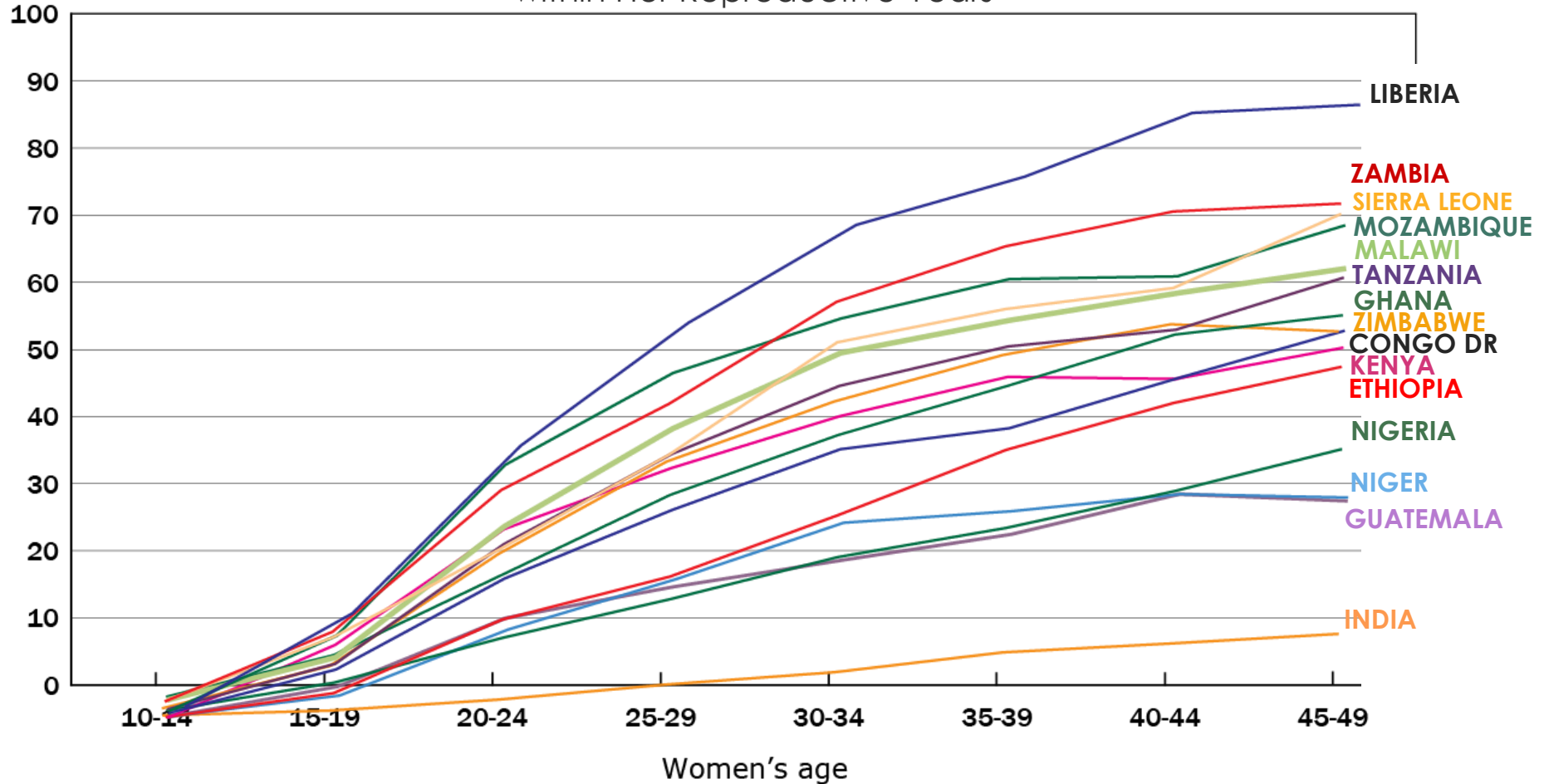
Kelly Hallman, Nora Kenworthy, Judith Diers, Nick Swan, Bashi Devnarain. 2014. "The Shrinking World of Girls at Puberty: Violence and Gender-Divergent Access to the Public Sphere among Adolescents in South Africa," *Global Public Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice*, 2014 Oct 10:1-17. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2014.964746>

Invade, Expand, and Redirect Economic Markets – Several Dimensions

- Transitioning girls from being property to others – their sexuality, labor, and fertility – to being assets for themselves
- Establishing age-graded financial literacy and safe savings
- Giving girls organizational and livelihood skills to support themselves and their younger (and soon older) dependents
- Strengthening girls' access to and control of resources and their bargaining position – anchoring their physical integrity, ability to claim their rights, and safe access to public space and entitlements

There are likely already but are going to be sole and substantial supporters to themselves and their children

Percent of Adolescent Girls Who, if Present Trends Continue, will be a Single Mother within Her Reproductive Years

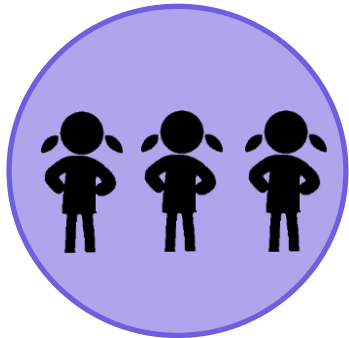


Sources: Clark, Shelley. Analyses originally commissioned by the Population Council and key relevant data can be found in: "Single Motherhood, Poverty, and Child Mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Life Course Perspective." Commissioned by the Population Council; Clark, Shelley and Dana Hamplva. 2013. "Single Motherhood and Child Mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa: a Life Course Perspective." *Demography*, 50 (5):1521-1549; Clark, Shelley and Sarah Brauner-Otto. 2015. "Divorce in Sub Saharan Africa : Are Unions Becoming Less Stable?" *Population and Development Review*, 41 (4):583-605.

The transformational change model operates at two levels especially if the audience is the most excluded girls

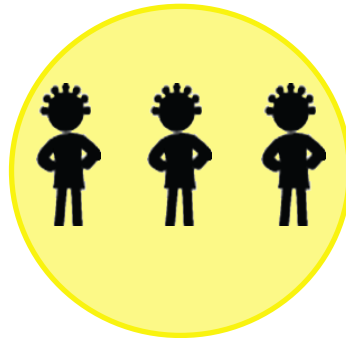
Level 1: Creating regularly available (at least weekly) segment-specific spaces for real peers, that is, girls who are like each other; these spaces provide:

- Acquiring health/social/economic/cognitive assets
- A place for play
- Safety resource from which to craft personal and community security
- An alternative power base



**Out-of-school girls aged
10-14 living with neither
parent**

**Tuesday – Thursday
3 – 4:30 PM**



Married girls aged 15-19

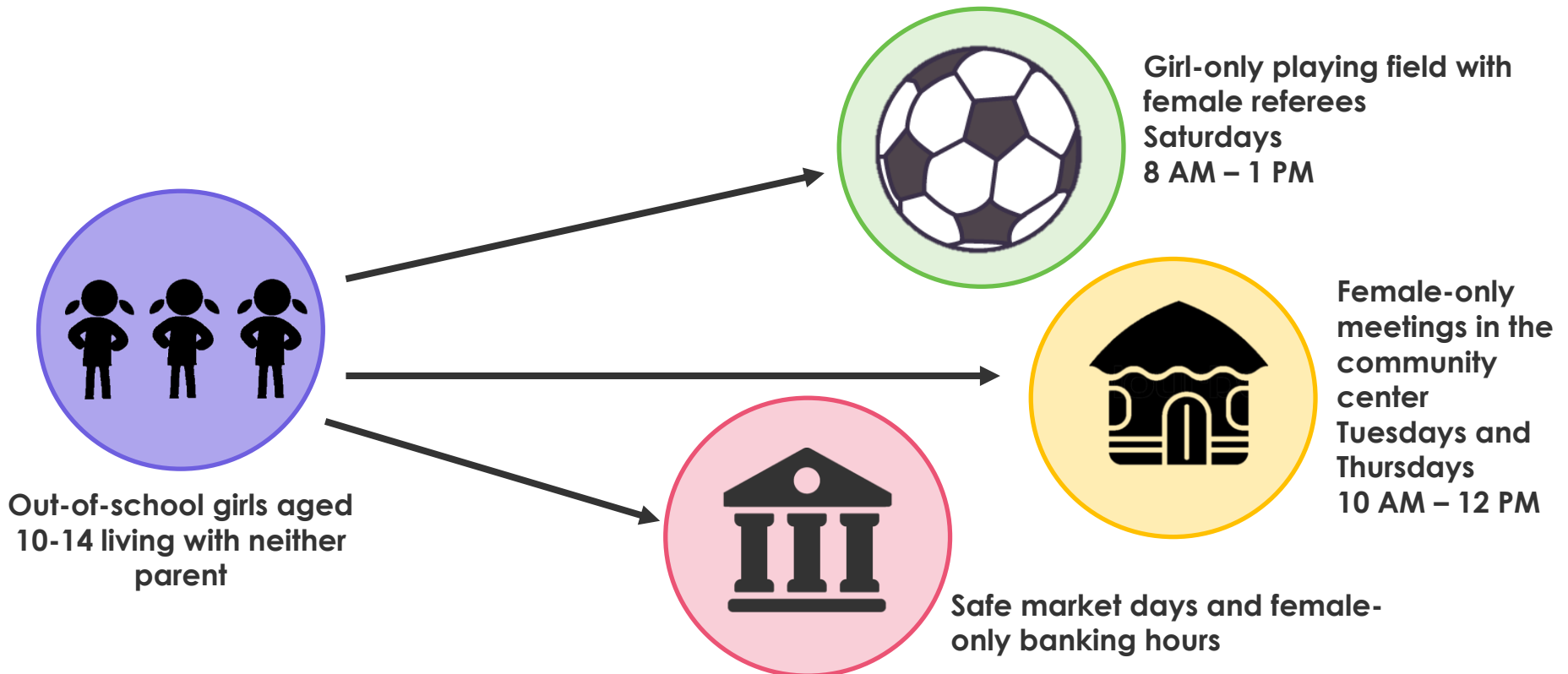
**Sundays
2 – 4:30 PM**



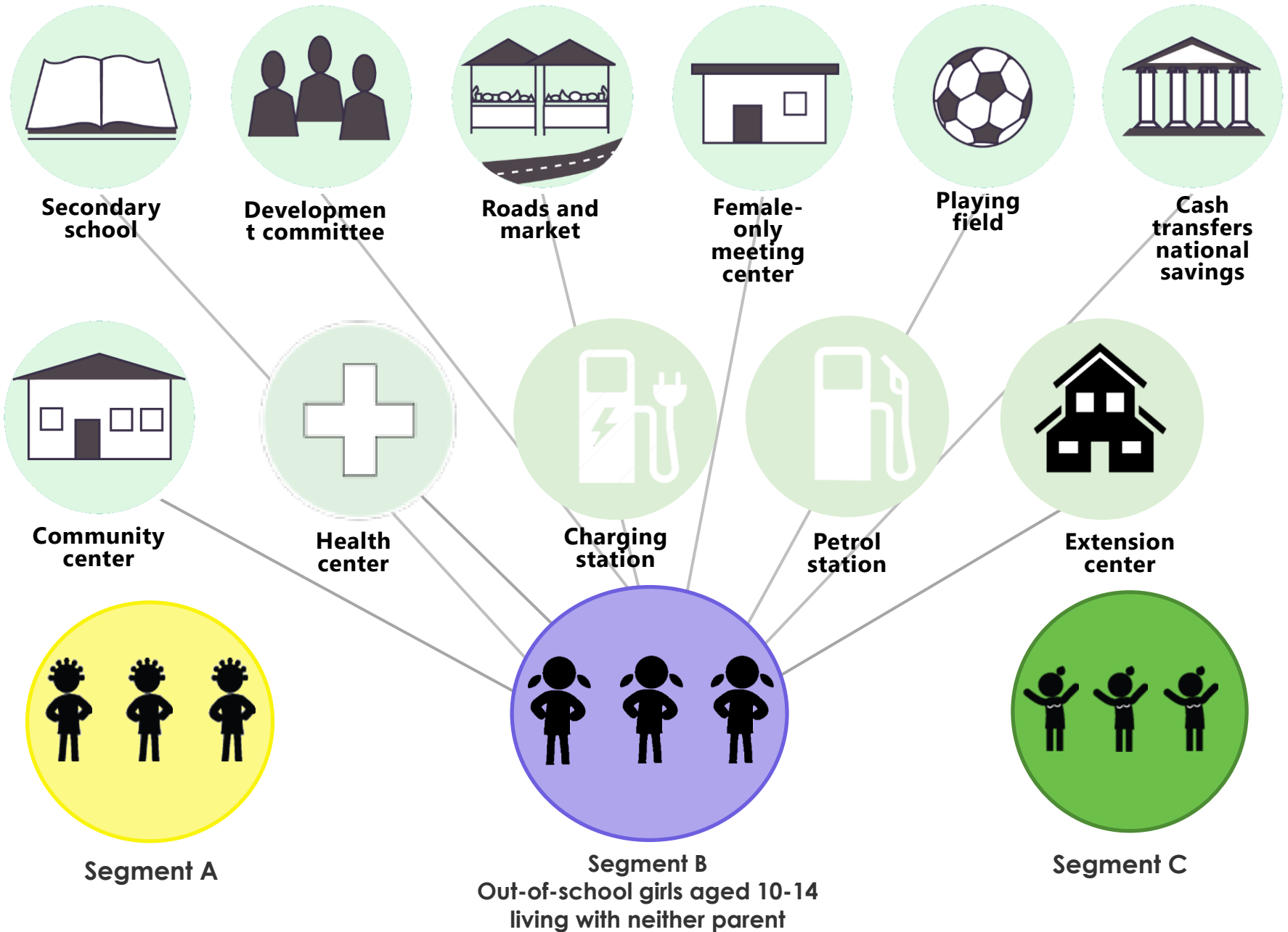
**Out-of-school, unmarried girls
working in bar areas aged 15-17**

**Saturdays
5 – 8 PM**

- **Level 2:** Anchored around these segment-specific spaces:
 - create working links and measurable access to investments already on the ground including but not limited to playing fields, playing opportunities, and other facilities by building a social capital base and specific plans



The Full Vision



A Very Short History of Our Experience

- 1995: First ever meeting on adolescent girls in developing countries and the potential of sports
 - Take-home: US data, comprehensive and convincing, but also important that across **all the leaders and sectors in the room, all had participated in sports**
 - Multiple individual contributions sports activity made were **not formed into a theory of change or strategy to see and engage excluded girls**
 - The database was largely Western, and often biased by elite capture

1987: The Mathare Youth Sports Association Football Program for Girls, Kenya

- Easier to engage the younger than the older
- A regular, girls-only space is necessary to create pathways to ascending leadership (becoming a referee, chair of the youth association, etc.)
- Without such a path, the number of games the girls had as well as their proportion declined
- Most resource decisions were made for them (e.g. purchasing tents for the younger children always had to bring by the boys; having male referees of girls games)
- A replication of gender roles, e.g. girls being asked to wash the jerseys of boys
- Conventional youth program leadership did not understand that females needed a significantly different model



Photo Credit: Mathare Youth Sports Association's Shootback Project

Commentary
Laying the Foundation for Girls' Healthy Futures: Can Sports Play a Role?
Martha Brady

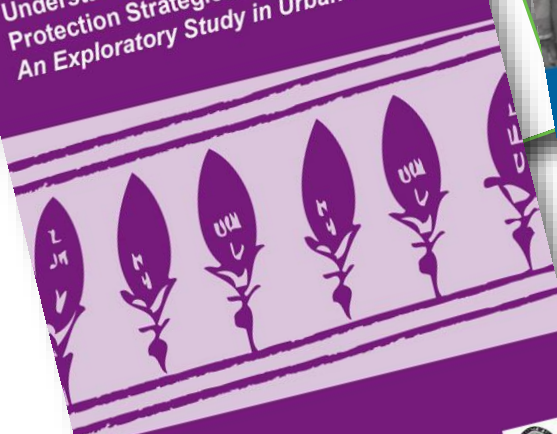
Limitations of Services for Adolescents

For many girls in developing countries, adolescence is characterized by high risk for early and unwanted sexual activity, forced marriage, and early pregnancy, none of which is likely to change these trends. Sex education courses offered in schools, but typically, these courses avoided sensitive sexual issues. Health facilities (clinics and hospitals) have tended to provide reproductive health services to young married women, but recently are services beginning to be offered to unmarried women, including those who are sexually active.

Providing new opportunities to adolescent girls in socially conservative settings: The Ishraq program in rural Upper Egypt




Understanding Adolescent Girls' Protection Strategies against HIV: An Exploratory Study in Urban Lusaka



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LETTING GIRLS PLAY
THE MATHARE YOUTH SPORTS ASSOCIATION'S FOOTBALL PROGRAM FOR GIRLS



MARATHA BRADY AND ARJMAND BANU KHAN

CREATING SAFE SPACES AND BUILDING SOCIAL ASSETS FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: A NEW ROLE FOR SPORTS

MARATHA BRADY

We are witnessing the convergence of two important trends; the international women's health and rights community's appreciation of sports as a legitimate field of action and inquiry, and the interests of women's groups to reach beyond their traditional scope to incorporate reproductive issues into their agenda. This convergence reflects on the role sports can play in building

Leveling the playing field: Building girls' sports programs and creating new opportunities
Prepared by Martha Brady

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, more girls and women are participating in sports than ever before. Even in the most unlikely of places, girls are stepping onto playing fields, joining teams, and competing in sports. In some cases, girls are stepping onto fields, joining teams, and competing in sports. In some cases, girls are stepping onto fields, joining teams, and competing in sports.



Newsday
Reprints
Brady: Olympics remind us that sports can empower women in developing countries
August 10, 2012 by MARTHA BRADY

The 2012 London Olympics will be remembered as the first time that the Olympic torch handed over to the next generation of young athletes, the torch was passed to a woman. For the first time in Olympic history, the United States sent more female athletes than males to the Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and London.

According to the International Olympic Committee's research and marketing department, the dominance of male athletes has begun to wane in recent years. In fact, the IOC reported that ratings have been 50 percent higher among 12- to 17-year-old girls than for the 18 to 24 age group. The highest-rated network show that 12-year-old girls around the globe are also able to watch their countrywomen (and many compete in the international arena).

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, more girls and women are participating in sports than ever before. Even in the most unlikely of places, girls are stepping onto fields, joining teams, and competing in sports.

In recent years, sports have begun to appear on the agenda of many countries and international organizations. This growing interest in strengthening the ability of girls to watch their countrywomen (and many compete in the international arena).

Despite these positive developments, the implementation of solid and vibrant sports programs remains a challenge, particularly in developing countries.

It's well known that sports participation benefits physical and mental health. Sports and play also build children's self-confidence, and can reduce post-traumatic stress. And sports programs can be used as venues for delivering information about health, including on avoiding children's play activities that may be harmful to their health.

The emergence of new sports opportunities for girls in the developing world represents a real breakthrough from traditional definitions of femininity. Beyond the close physical and health benefits of sports, participation provides girls with the opportunity to develop new skills, to learn and lead, and to expand and deepen their network of friends. Well-designed and

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2001: Ishraq Program, Egypt

- 6% of the girls only and 51% of the boys had some sort of physical activity the week before
 - In 2014, 7% of the boys but only .8% of girls played in a youth sports center (these are urban girls mainly) and 17%+ percent of boys and only .6% of girls participated in street football
- Despite formal investments, conventional female leadership programs had never before incorporated sports
 - The RADAT Program was targeted at rural areas for many years; went so far as raising chickens but never touched sports
- Highlights of Ishraq Program:
 - Sports activity delayed 2-3 months after the program had been validated and accepted
 - Began with limited motions (families concerned about breaking hymens) and investment made in modest track suits
 - Had to create places where girls could not be seen – visual barriers necessary; same was true in parts of Sudan in a parallel program
 - To address boys desire to control sisters and “jealousy”, some 10% of the budget was dedicated to organizing boy activities



Photo Credit: Population Council

- Table tennis was more acceptable as a social sport than soccer
- Commitment of program was to awaken in typical excluded rural girl a sense of joy and pride in the competence of her body and to meet her own goals – rather than participate in elite sports
- Most every part of the program required creating entirely new training, content and approaches

Making a New Space:

Girls creating a basketball court in West Darfur State



Photo Credit: Rachel Hermes

- Girls recruited from three secondary schools where very high proportion of girls participate in schooling but have no adjunct activities and little community access
- Recruitment using snowball technique (*Source: Rachel Hermes, personal communication, 2018*)

Key Factors that Enabled Girls' Basketball in West Darfur

- Secure girls-only facility for practice
- Routine practice time (every Fri and Sat morning)
- Word-of-mouth recruitment
- Sudanese female co-coach
- Support of the West Darfur State Ministry of Education
- Girls' dedication



Photo Credit: Rachel Hermes

Potential of Sports of Asset Building among Poor Girls and Transforming Poor Communities

- Offering excluded girls (often the majority) **proud ownership of body** and a how-to-use manual
- Creating regular, real peer affiliation and safety and livelihood supporting social networks
- Creating a regular place for **voice and action** for females in the community, an example for all (especially inspiring to the younger cadres of excluded girls)
- Building a commitment to both **self-improvement** and **group cooperation** simultaneously
- Creating a new **social identity** (experienced by girls and those outside)
- Providing a **functioning, tangible safety net** and space from which to **negotiate change**. I venture that the poorest girls, regularly high risk, engaged in a regular sports activity would have better answers to the following questions than those girls not engaged:
 - Do you have someone you could turn to in an emergency?
 - Do you have someone you can borrow money from in an emergency?
 - Do you have a safe place to spend the night in an emergency?
 - Do you have someone to turn to if you are threatened with child marriage, etc.?
- Providing a **regularly occurring activity** at which young **females are expected at** (regardless of content, this is a game changer, whether it's sports or saving groups – at body level an entitlement is reached and always better than the one-off; **poor girls don't need courses, they need social institutions**)
- Sports intensifies school girls' commitment and performance undoubtedly and for **out of school girls it can be especially revolutionary because it gives them a new social identity and institutionalized base of support and a place to acquire some formal skills – reading and numeracy**
- For all girls, **sports is an important form of non-formal education**, giving them skills and confidence that girls in school typically don't get, even if they are relatively high performers

Summary

Community-based, organized physical activity/sports is **vital non-formal education**, which has the promise of promoting in the most marginalized girls a **proud ownership of self**, connection to **community resources** from which they are positioned to benefit the most, provides **active protective assets** preventing, mitigating, and “treating” many of the worst harms – forced sex, pregnancy, HIV, and so forth – and forges a **tangible base** for civil society – literally **taking ground** and altering in measurable ways the walkable community that is their **home**.



Thank You

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